Survey No. SM-364

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form Magi No. #1903644604

DOE __yes __no

1. Nam	e (indicate pref	ferred name)		
historic	Ridgell House			
and/or common	Ridgell House			
2. Loca	ation			
street & number	3/4 mile south of the center of the	St. James Road at property	approximately	not for publication
city, town	Lexington Park	_X_ vicinity of	congressional district	First
state	Maryland	county	St. Mary's	
3. Clas	sification			
Category district building(s) _X structure site object	Ownership X public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered Xnot applicable	Status occupied wnoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use N/A (f agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	formerly: private museum residence park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
<u>4. Own</u>	er of Propert	(give names an	d mailing addresses	of <u>all</u> owners)
name	Department of Natu	ıral Resources		
street & number	Tawes State Office	Building	telephone no	.:
city, town	Annapolis	state	and zip code Mary	land 21401
5. Loca	ition of Lega	l Description	n	
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc. St.	Mary's County Cou	rthouse	liber 225
street & number				folio 17
city, town	Leo	nardtown	state	Maryland
6. Repr	esentation i	n Existing	Historical Surve	eys
iltle	Maryland Historica Historic Sites Sur			
date	March 1983		federalX state	county local
pository for sur	vey records Maryland	Historical Trust,	21 State Circle	
city, town	Annapoli	s	state	Maryland 21401

7. Description	n
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Survey No. SM-364

Condition excellent deteriorated goodX ruins fair unexposed	Check one unaltered X altered	Check one X original site moved date of move	
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Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Ridgell House is an "L" shaped plan, two story gable roofed frame residence erected c. 1890, presumably by the Ridgell family. The house is built in three sections, one room deep, two rooms wide in the main section and joined at one time by a hyphen or roofed breezeway to a detached kitchen.

The Ridgell House is located approximately three-fourths of a mile south of St. James Road and approximately one-half of a mile east of Maryland Route 235, approximately five miles southeast of Lexington Park. The house is now part of the Elms property, located slightly southwest of the center of the property and approximately in the center of the semi-circular tract identified as Birch's Neck in a 1941 survey. Access to the house is via an unpaved road approximately three-fourths of a mile long leading south from St. James Road near the center of the Elms property.

The Ridgell House faces north toward St. James Road and is in very poor to ruined condition. The house consists of three distinct sections. The main house is a two-story frame structure two bays wide and one room deep, measuring approximately sixteen by twenty-four feet. A single exterior stove chimney was at one time centered on the west end of the gable roof. This chimney has now almost completely collapsed. An early or perhaps original frame wing, approximately sixteen feet square, projects from the west gable end of the main house. This wing was originally two stories by two bays wide with the same depth as the main house. This wing is now in ruinous condition, and only the lower walls are standing. A one-story frame outbuilding or detached kitchen is located immediately to the south of the wing and was at one time joined to the wing by a one-story hyphen or roofed breezeway. Consistency of materials, building style and condition of the house, wing and outbuilding indicate that all parts were completed at about the same date, 1890-1900, presumably during the Ridgell's ownership (1893-1942).

The house and wing rest on wood post foundations without a basement. Framing timbers, exterior siding boards, interior flooring of standard 3" wide boards and lathing have been machine cut. Machined nails can be found throughout the structure. Exterior weatherboards are one-fourth of an inch thick, overlapped about one-fourth of an inch, unbeaded, and nailed directly to the framing timbers. The weatherboard siding is trimmed with 1 x 3 cornerboards on all corners. Roofing timbers are nailed to a roofplate set flush with the exterior walls; the overhang is minimal, two inches or less beyond the exterior walls. The roofing material on the main house and addition is corrugated sheet metal joined in ten-inch sections and nailed directly to wooden rafters. The present roof appears to be original.

1 County Land Records CBG 14/50, George W. Joy, Jr., Surveyor, 9 December, 1941.

0. 3	ngillicalice		Survey No.	SF1-364
Period Areas of Significance— prehistoric archeology-prehistoric 1400–1499 archeology-historic 1500–1599 agriculture 1600–1699 X architecture 1700–1799 art X 1800–1899 commerce 1900– communications		Check and justify below community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlemen industry invention	law literature military music	science sculpture _X_ social/ humanitarian theater
Specific	dates	Builder/Architect		
check:	Applicable Criteria:A and/or Applicable Exception: Level of Significance:	A _B _C _D _		
D				

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Ridgell House is notable for architectural significance, historical associations with an early occupation site, and as an example of black land ownership in the late nineteenth century.

The Ridgell House is an excellent example of a late nineteenth century farmhouse that combines a traditional plan and form with a series of wings to form an unusual dwelling complex. The main section of the house is a twostory gable roofed structure with a side hall plan. In form, plan and detail it is similar to housing found throughout Tidewater Maryland and Virginia dating from the second half of the nineteenth through the early years of the twentieth century. The now partly collapsed wing was evidently added to the west end of the house soon after the main structure was completed. In plan, size and form theis wing is a common feature of this kind of structure. In contraxt, the detached secondary building with a covered breezeway or hyphen is an unusual feature, as is the semidetached L-plan of the entire complex. The result is a larger and more sophisticated building than would be suggested by the original house. A number of individual details of the house is also worthy of note. The original two-story section rests on round log pilings set into the ground. The use of earthfast posts to support buildings is an architectural device that has been employed in the Tidewater region since the seventeenth century and continues to be used today to support small agricultural buildings and domestic outbuildings. While a variety of evidence indicates that this technique was used with dwellings it is increasingly uncommon to find surviving examples.

Other details of particular interest include the pent closet on the detached wing, the small poured concrete cellar, and a brick-lined well to the north of the kitchen wing.

The Ridgell House is situated on a tract of land within the Elms Property identified at least as early as the mid-nineteenth century as Birches Neck. Although a clear chain of title cannot be established for the tract owing to a courthouse fire in 1831, archeological evidence has been located from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, suggesting continuous occupation.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attachment

10. Geo	graphical Data		
Quadrangle name	ed property <u>located on 1021.5</u> St. Mary's City & Point No	Point, MD	Quadrangle scale 1:24,000
UTM References	lo NOT complete UTM referen	ces	
Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
C		D	
$G \square \square$		+	
Verbal boundary of See attac	description and justification		
List all states and	d counties for properties overlap	ping state or county bo	undaries
state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code
11. Form	Prepared By		
name/title	Susanne Moore, Historic S:	ites Surveyor	
organization	Maryland Historical Trust	date Ma	rch 1983
street & number	21 State Circle/ Shaw Hous	se telephone	269-2438
city or town	Annapolis	state	Maryland 21401

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust

Shaw House

21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438

SM-364

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received date entered

Ridgell House

Continuation sheet St. Mary's County, Maryland

Item number

Page

je 1

The north facade of the house is two bays wide, with a door in the east bay and an altered window opening on the west. There are two window openings on the second story.

On the east gable end of the house, there is a single window opening in the north bay of the first story and a single window opening in the south bay of the second story.

The south facade is similar to the north facade, with a door in the east bay of the first story and windows in the west bay at the first story and both the east and west bays of the second story.

The west end of the main section is partly concealed by the west addition. Exterior weatherboards remain on the wall and were apparently never given an interior finish. A twelve-inch wide opening in the siding runs the full height of the gable end and is all that remains of the former chimney.

The interior of the main house consists of a side hall and parlor plan, with the stair passage to the east and the parlor to the west. The open-string stair rises against the east gable wall in a straight run to the second floor. A door in the west partition wall of the passage opens into the parlor, which measures approximately fifteen by fifteen and-one-half feet. This room was heated by a stove chimney on the west gable end. A door to the left of the chimney leads into the west wing.

The second floor consisted originally of two rooms; the former partition wall is now removed. No ceiling remains; thirteen frafters support lateral nailing boards to which the sheet metal roof is attached.

The wing probably is an early addition to the house because the exterior siding is visible on the west gable end of the main house and the exterior siding of the north and south facades is interrupted to form seams between the two sections.

Only the lower walls of the two-story frame wing to the west still survive. On the north facade, there is a door to the west on the first story with a window opening immediately to the east of the door. The only opening in the surviving portion of the west gable end is a small window in the north bay of the first story. The south facade is similar to the north facade with a door to the west of center and a window immediately to the east. The interior of the wing is in ruins. The remains of an enclosed stair (along the west wall) survive, and there appears to have been a built-in cupboard in the northwest corner.

The kitchen/storage building measures approximately fourteen-and-one-half by sixteen-and-one-half feet. It is a one-story gable-roofed frame structure resting on concrete piers. A cellar with poured concrete walls underlies the center of the structure, measuring approximately ten by fifteen feet. The structure has a center doorway on its north facade. The east and west walls are identical, each containing two windows. A brick stove chimney is centered on

OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

SM-364

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

Ridgell House

Continuation sheet St. Mary's County, Maryland Item number

For NPS use only received date entered

Page

7

the south gable end and flanked by a door with a transom to the east and a small lean-to or pent closet to the west. This pent is an addition and measures four by five feet. A window in the south wall is the only opening in the pent, which is covered with plain weatherboard siding and a corrugated metal roof.

OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

SM-364

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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For NPS use only

received

date entered

Ridgell House

Continuation sheet St. Mary's County, Maryland Item number

3

Page

3

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this site, however, is its ownership by blacks following the Civil War. By the 1870'a the farm was owned and operated by a black man, Joshah Reed. The house is believed to date to the 1890's, however, after the land passed out of black ownership. The property was then acquired by the Ridgell family who occupied the house continuously until the early 1940s and intermittently thereafter until the family sold it in 1955.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage: a) 1001.44 acres (Elms) + b) 20.091 Pulliam/Wise in holding acquired 12 October 1982 = TOTAL 1021.531 acres

Verbal Boundary Description:

a) Elms
Liber 225/Folio 17
INQUISITION (Petition for Condemnation)
17 December 1974
State of Maryland, Plaintiff
Robert F. Comstock, et. al., Defendants
Damages: \$1,3412,100.00

....all that tract or parcel of land situate and lying in the 1st Election District of St. Mary's County, and being more particularly described as follows:

b) Pulliam/Wises in holding:

Liber 128/Folio 286 DEED

12 October 1982

FROM: William H. and Patricia Ann Pulliam and Ralph Wise

TO: The State of Maryland for the use of the Department of Natural

Resources.

Consideration: \$400,000.00

....all that lot of ground situate in St. Mary's County, State of Maryland and described as follows, that is to say:

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. SM - 364 Magi No. 1903645604 DOE __yes __no

4 8:	-			
1. Nam	1e (indicate pr	eferred name)		
historic				-
and/or common	Ridgell House			
2. Loca	ation			
street & number			approximately the co	enter _ not for publication
city, town Lex	ington Park	_X_ vicinity of	congressional district	
state Mar	yland	county	St. Mary's County	
3. Clas	sification			
Category district building(s) _x_ structure site object	Ownership _x_ public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered _x not applicable	Status occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Prope	rty (give names a	nd mailing addresses	of <u>all</u> owners)
name Depart	ment of Natural Res	sources		
street & number	Tawes State Offic		telephone no	.:
city, town	Annapolis	state	and zip code Maryl	and 21401
5. Loca	ation of Leg	al Description	on	
courthouse, regi	stry of deeds, etc. St.	Mary's County Court	House	liber 225
street & number				folio 17
city, town	Leonardtown		state 1	Maryland
6. Rep	resentation	in Existing	Historical Surve	ys
title				
date			federal state	county local
pository for su	ırvey records			
city, town			state	
			31016	

7. Description

Survey No. SM-364

Condition excellent deteriorated goodx ruins fair unexposed	Check one unaltered altered	Check onex_original site moved date of move	
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Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Ridgell House is located approximately three-fourths of a mile south of St. James Church Road and approximately one-half of a mile east of Maryland Route 235, approximately five miles southeast of Lexington Park. The house is now part of the Elms Property, located slightly southwest of the center of the property and approximately in the center of the semi-circular tract identified as Birch's Neck in a 1941 survey. Access to the house is via an unpaved road approximately three-fourths of a mile long leading south from St. James Church Road near the center of the Elms Property.

The Ridgell House faces north toward St. James Church Road and is in very poor to ruined condition. The house consists of three distinct sections. The main house is a two-story frame structure two bays wide and one room deep, measuring approximately sixteen by twenty-four feet. A single exterior stove chimney was at one time centered on the west end of the gable roof. This chimney has now almost completely collapsed. An early or perhaps original frame wing, approximately sixteen feet square, projects from the west gable end of the main house. This wing was originally two stories by two bays wide with the same depth as the main house. This wing is now in ruinous condition, and only the lower walls are standing. A one-story frame outbuilding or detached kitchen is located immediately to the south of the wing and was at one time joined to the wing by a one-story hyphen or roofed breezeway. Consistency of materials, building style and condition of the house, wing and outbuilding indicate that all parts were completed at about the same date, 1890-1900, presumably during the Ridgell's ownership (1893-1942).

The house and wing rest on wood post foundations without a basement. Framing timbers, exterior siding boards, interior flooring, standard three-inch wide boards, and lathing have been machine cut. Machined nails can be found throughout the structure. Exterior weatherboards are one-fourth of an inch thick, overlapped about one-fourth of an inch, unbeaded, and nailed directly to the framing timbers. The weatherboard siding is trimmed with one by three cornerboards on all corners. Roofing timbers are nailed to a roof-plate set flush with the exterior walls, the overhang is minimal, two inches or less beyond the exterior walls. The roofing material on the main house and addition is corrugated sheet metal joined in ten-inch sections and nailed directly to wooden rafters. The present roofs appear to be original.

The north facade of the house is two bays wide, with a door in the east bay and an altered window opening on the west. There are two window openings on the second story.

¹County Land Records CBG 14/50, George W. Joy, Jr., Surveyor, December 9, 1941.

Significance 5M-364 Survey No. Areas of Significance—Check and justify below Period __ archeology-prehistoric ____ community planning _ prehistoric landscape architecture ____ religion _ 1400–1499 __ archeology-historic conservation science ___ agriculture 1500-1599 economics . literature sculpture _ 1600–1699 _x architecture education military _x_ social/ _ 1700-1799 ____ art engineering music humanitarian _x_ 1800-1899 _ commerce exploration/settlement _ philosophy theater ____ 1900communications industry politics/government transportation invention other (specify)

THE COLUMN TO SERVICE

and/or
Applicable Exception: _A _B _C _D _E _F _G

Level of Significance: __national __state _xlocal

Builder/Architect

С

В

Specific dates

Applicable Criteria:

check:

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Ridgell House is notable for architectural significance, historical associations with an occupation site, and as an example of black land ownership in the late nineteenth century.

The Ridgell House is an excellent example of a late nineteenth-century farmhouse that combines a traditional plan and form with a series of wings to form an unusual dwelling complex. The main section of the house is a twostory gable roofed structure with a side hall plan. In form, plan and detail it is similar to houses found throughout Tidewater Maryland and Virginia dating from the second half of the nineteenth through the early years of the twentieth century. The now partly collapsed wing was evidently added to the west end of the house soon after the main structure was completed. size and form this wing is a common feature of this kind of structure. In contrast, the detached secondary building with a covered breezeway or hyphen is an unusual feature, as is the semidetached L-plan of the entire complex. The result is a larger and more sophisticated building than would be suggested by the original house. A number of individual details of the house is also worthy of note. The original two-story section rests on round log pilings set into the ground. The use of earthfast posts to support buildings is an architectural device that has been employed in the Tidewater region since the seventeenth century and continues to be used today to support small agricultural buildings and domestic outbuildings. While a variety of evidence indicates that this technique was used with dwellings, it is increasingly uncommon to find surviving examples.

Other details of particular interest include the pent closet on the detached wing, its small poured concrete cellar, and a brick-lined well to the north of the kitchen wing.

The Ridgell House is situated on a tract of land within the Elms Property identified at least as early as the mid nineteenth century as Birches Neck. Although a clear chain of title cannot be established for the tract owing to a courthouse fire in 1831, archeological evidence has been located from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, suggesting continuous occupation.

10. Geographi	cal Data		
		City and Point	ms Property No Poin Quadrangle scalel:24, 000
Zone Easting No	orthing	B Zone	e Easting Northing
C		D F H	
Verbal boundary description	and justification		
List all states and counties f	or properties ove	rlapping state or	county boundaries
state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code
11. Form Prep	ared By		
name/title Susanne Moore,	Historic Sites	s Surveyor	
organization Maryland Histo	rical Trust		date March 1983
street & number 21 State C	ircle, Shaw Hou	ıse	telephone (301) 263-2438
city or town Annapolis			state Maryland 21401

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return to: Maryland Historical Trust

Shaw House 21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438

RIDGELL HOUSE #7 Description Page 2

On the east gable end of the house, there is a single window opening in the north bay of the first story and a single window opening in the south bay of the second story.

The south facade is similar to the north facade, with a door in the east bay of the first story and windows in the west bay at the first story and both the east and west bays of the second story.

The west end of the main section if partly concealed by the west addition. Exterior weatherboards remain on the wall and were apparently never given an interior finish. A twelve-inch wide opening in the siding runs the full height of the gable end and is all that remains of the former chimney.

The second floor consisted originally of two rooms; the former partition wall is now removed. No ceiling remains; thirteen rafters support lateral nailing boards to which the sheet metal roof is attached.

The interior of the main house consists of a side hall and parlor plan, with the stair passage to the east and the parlor to the west. The open-string stair rises against the east gable wall in a straight run to the second floor. A door in the west partition wall of the passage opens into the parlor, which measures approximately 15 by 15 1/2 feet. This room was heated by a stove chimney on the west gable end. A door to the left of the chimney leads into the west wing.

The wing probably is an early addition to the house because the exterior siding is visible on the west gable end of the main house and the exterior siding of the north and south facades is interrupted to form seams between the two sections.

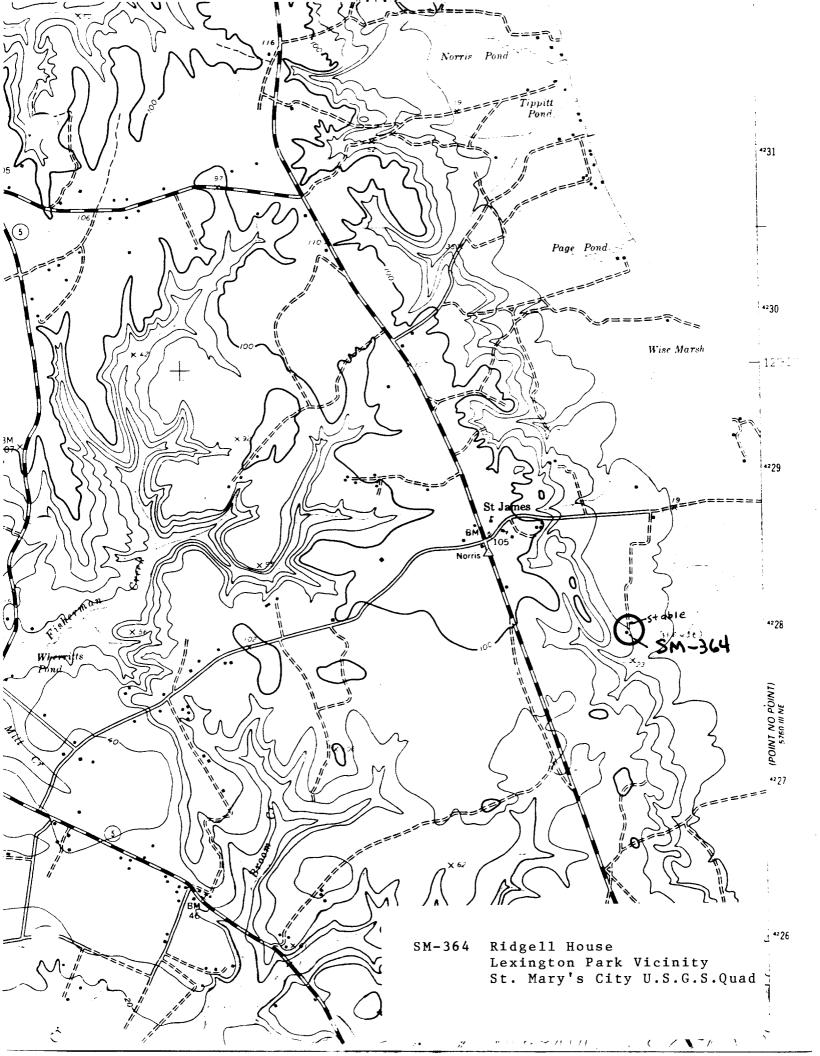
Only the lower walls of the two-story frame wing to the west still survive. On the north facade, there is a door to the west on the first story with a window opening immediately to the east of the door. The only opening in the surviving portion of the west gable end is a small window in the north bay of the first story. The south facade is similar to the north facade with a door to the west of center and a window immediately to the east. The interior of the wing is in ruins. The remains of an enclosed stair along the west wall survive, and there appears to have been a built-in cupboard in the northwest corner.

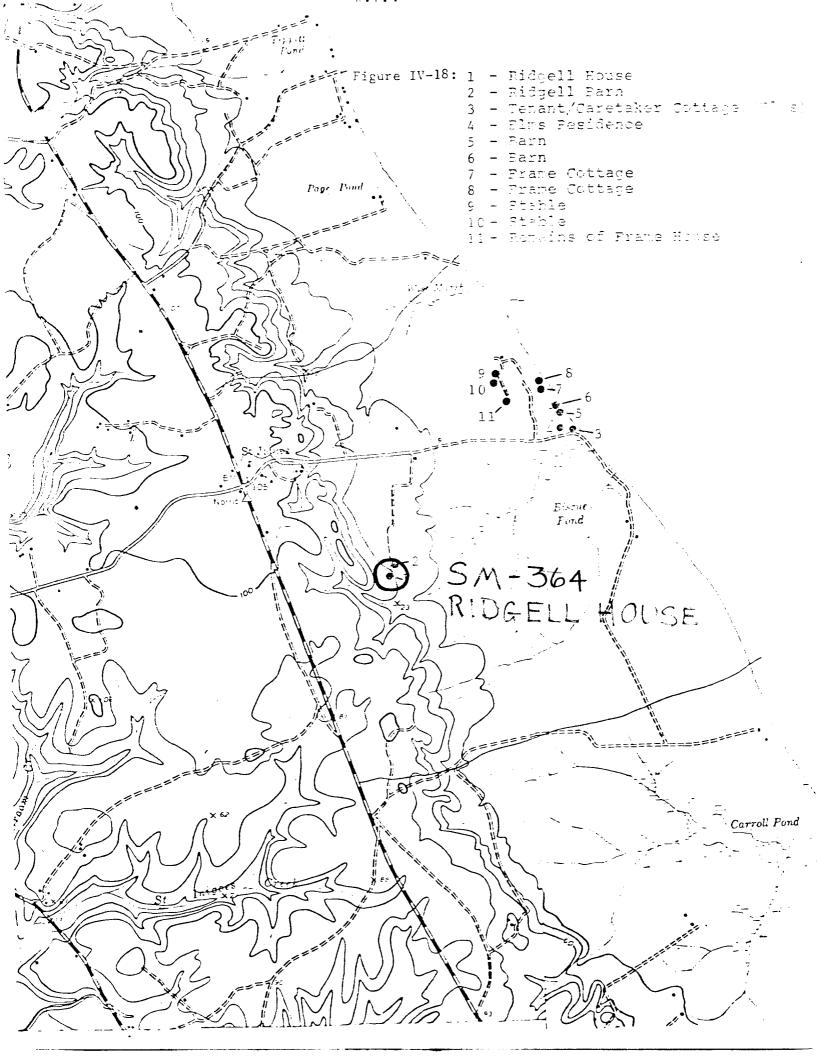
RIDGELL HOUSE #7 Description Page 3

The kitchen/storage building measures approximately 14 1/2 by 16 1/2 feet. It is a one-story gable-roofed frame structure resting on concrete piers. A cellar with poured concrete walls underlies the center of the structure, measuring approximately ten by fifteen feet. The structure has a center doorway on its north facade. The east and west walls are identical, each containing two windows. A brick stove chimney is centered on the south gable end and flanked by a door with a transom to the east and a small lean-to or pent closet to the west. This pent is an addition and measures four by five feet. A window in the south wall is the only opening in the pent, which is covered with plain weatherboard siding and a corregated metal roof.

RIDGELL HOUSE #8 Significance Page 2

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this site, however, is its ownership by blacks following the Civil War. By the 1870s, the farm was owned and operated by a black man, Josiah Reed. The house is believed to date to the 1890s, when the land passed to Reed's descendents, the Ridgell family. The property was continuously occupied by the Ridgells until the early 1940s and intermittently thereafter until the family sold it in 1955.









Ridgell House (Elms Property) SM-364 St. Marys County, Md Susanne Moore Jan 1983 Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD NE corner 1/6



Ridgell House (Elms Property) SM-364 St Marys County, Md Susanne Moore Jan 1983 Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD North elevation 2/6



Ridgell House (Elms Property) SM-364 St. Marys County, Md Susanne Moore Jan 1983 Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD NW Corner 3/6



Ridgell House (Elms Property) SM-364 St. Marys County, MD Susanne Moore Jan 1983 Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD SW corner 4/6



Ridgell House (Elms Property) SM-364
St. Marys County, MD
Susanne Moore
Jan 1983
Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD
East elevation, kitchen/storage building
5/6



Ridgell House (Elms Property) SM-364 St. Marys County, MD Susanne Moore Jan 1983 Md Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD SE Corner 6/6